

Eastern New York and Western New England Will See Stretch of Harsh Winter Weather Through Tuesday.

The National Weather Service is forecasting frigid temperatures and periods of snow through Tuesday. Although temperatures will probably not set low temperature records, the upcoming 4-5 day period of very cold temperatures may result in some frozen pipes and water main breaks. The best chance for widespread accumulating snow is Today and Monday.

The National Weather Service in Albany is urging people to be safe during the cold snap. Wear extra layers of clothing, and cover as much skin as possible – especially tonight and Saturday morning when wind chills are forecast to dip to -25- to 35°F across the southern Adirondacks and wind chills of -10 to -20°F are expected elsewhere.

It will be very cold on Monday with many locations seeing temperatures not rising out of the single digits. With snow expected on Monday, people will likely be outside shoveling. Make sure you bundle up while shoveling snow. According to the Centers for Disease Control, if you start to feel tingling or numbness in fingers or toes, get inside to a warm room quickly.

Please check on elderly neighbors and relatives as they are more susceptible to problems from severe winter weather. The New York State Public Service Commission has a hotline to call in case of termination of gas or electric service to a home. The number is 1-800-342-3355.

Don't try to thaw frozen pipes with torches or other open flame as this is a fire hazard. Use a hair drier instead. To prevent frozen pipes, the Red Cross suggests the following measures:

- Keep garage doors closed if there are water supply lines in the garage.
- Open kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing. Be sure to move any harmful cleaners and household chemicals up out of the reach of children.
- When the weather is very cold outside, let the cold water drip from the faucet served by exposed pipes. Running water through the pipe - even at a trickle - helps prevent pipes from freezing.
- Keep the thermostat set to the same temperature both during the day and at night. By temporarily suspending the use of lower nighttime temperatures, you may incur a higher heating bill, but you can prevent a much more costly repair job if pipes freeze and burst.
- If you will be going away during cold weather, leave the heat on in your home, set to a temperature no lower than 55° F.

The New York State Office of Fire prevention and control remind people that most deaths resulting from Carbon Monoxide poisoning happen during the winter months, mainly due to an increased use in fuel burning appliances. Carbon monoxide is a produced anytime a fuel is burned. Potential sources include gas or oil furnaces, water heaters, space heaters, clothes dryers, barbecue grills, fireplaces, wood-burning stoves, gas ovens, and generators. Carbon monoxide is a silent killer – you cannot see it, smell it or taste it. The ONLY safe way to detect it is with a carbon monoxide alarm.

Pets are sensitive to severe cold and are at risk for frostbite and hypothermia during extreme cold snaps. The Humane Society of the United States has the following tips to keep your pet safe during the winter months:

- The best prescription for winter's woes is to keep your dog or cat inside with you and your family. Don't leave pets outdoors when the temperature drops.
- Pets that spend a lot of time outdoors need more food in the winter because keeping warm depletes energy.
- Make sure your pet has plenty of water and routinely check your pet's water dish to make certain the water is fresh and unfrozen.
- The salt and other chemicals used to melt snow and ice can irritate the pads of your pet's feet. Wipe all paws with a damp towel before your pet licks them and irritates his/her mouth.

Spring will come. It always does. But for now, stay warm and stay safe.